

What should I do when my child argues with me?

Establish rules for following directions (e.g. listen, do not argue, ask questions if you do not understand, follow directions, etc.). These rules should be followed by everyone in the home.

Develop a routine of chores and activities for your child so they know what to expect. Make sure your child understands his/her responsibilities and when he/she must take care of them.

Reward your child for not arguing when told to do something. Give praise such as “Thank you for doing the dishes without arguing.” Allow your child to stay up late, watch a favorite TV show, play a game, or have a friend over to reward them as well.

Do not argue with your child. Do not argue with others, if you do so, your child will learn to argue. Treat your child with respect. Avoid confrontations by giving your child options. For example, say “You can either set the table or wash the dishes tonight. Which do you want to do?”

When your child argues, explain exactly what he/she is doing wrong, what he/she is supposed to be doing and why. Make certain that your child sees the relationship between his/her behavior and the consequences which follow.

When your child argues in public remove him from the situation until he/she can demonstrate self control and refrain from arguing. Be consistent; do not give in to your child’s arguing one time and expect him/her not to argue the next time.